

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: GOVT RESCINDS UNPOPULAR FORESTRY POLICY

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN DEMONSTRATION OF SENSITIVITY TO PUBLIC DESIRES, GOVT HAS SUSPENDED AND PROMISED TO RECONSIDER HIGHLY UNPOPULAR PLAN IT HAD ANNOUNCED TO LIMIT ACCES TO FORESTS IN THE INTEREST OF CONSERVATION. PLAN WAS MADE UNDER ONE OF FOUR RECENT NEW LAWS AFFECTING PEOPLE' S LIVES WHICH HAS SPIRRED WIDESPREAD DISCUSSION. DRP ACTING CHAIRMAN ANNOUNCED THAT DRP WOULD INVESTIGATE CONTROVERSIAL LAWS AND PROPOSE REVISIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. INFORMATION MINISTER YUN CHU- YONG ANNOUNCED THAT CABINET HAD DECIDED MARCH 27 TO SUSPEND IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREST PROTECTION PLAN DRAFTED BY HOME MINISTRY UNDER NEW FORESTRY LAW WHICH WAS SCHEDULED TO GO INTO EFFECT APRIL 1. UNDER THAT PLAN, CITIZENS COULD NOT ENTER FORESTS EXCEPT FOR HIKING WITH A POLICE PERMIT OR IN GROUPS SUPERVISED BY A GOVT OFFICIAL TO COLLECT FIREWOOD AND HILLTOP GRASS FOR FODDER. OBJECTIVE OF PLAN WAS AFFORESTATION FOR FLOOD CONTROL AND TO CONSERVE FIREWOOD SUPPLIES. YUN SAID CABINET HAD CONCLUDED THAT PLAN WOULD CREATE SEVERE TEMPORARY FUEL SHORTAGE IN COUNTRYSIDE AND INSTRUCTED HOME
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MINISTER KIM HYON- OK TO DRAFT A NEW PLAN IN COORDINATION WITH OTHER MINISTRIES. NEWSPAPER GOSSIP COLUMNS REPORTED THAT

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE, FINANCE, TRANSPORTATION, COMMERCE, AND HEALTH/ SOCIAL AFFAIRS HAD OPPOSED PLAN.

2. HOME MINISTER ACQUIRED POWER TO MAKE SUCH A PLAN WHEN EXTRAORDINARY STATE COUNCIL ON FEB 9 AMENDED GOVT ORGANIZATION LAW TRANSFERRING RESPONSIBILITY FOR FORESTS FROM MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE TO HOME MINISTRY AND PASSED NEW FORESTRY LAW EMPOWERING THE GOVT TO LIMIT ACCESS TO FORESTS. APPARENTLY HE TOOK THIS AS A MANDATE FOR UNILATERAL ACTION.

3. FORESTRY LAW WAS ONE OF FOUR RECENT INNOVATIONS APPROVED BY EXTRAORDINARY STATE COUNCIL AFFECTING PEOPLE'S DAILY LIVES WHICH HAVE STIMULATED WIDESPREAD DISCUSSION AND CONTROVERSY. FAMILY RITUAL LAW CONTAINS UNPOPULAR PROVISION BANNING FOOD FOR GUESTS AT FUNERALS AND CONTROVERSIAL PROVISION FORBIDDING PRINTED INVITATIONS FOR WEDDINGS AND OTHER PRIVATE CEREMONIES. BURIAL AND TOMBS LAW LIMITS THE SIZE OF GRAVES AND FORBIDS CONSTRUCTION OF THE TRADITIONAL BURIAL MOUND. MINOR OFFENSES LAW BANS MINI-SKIRTS AND LONG HAIR FOR MEN, AMONG OTHER THINGS.

4. DEMOCRATIC REPUBLICAN PARTY (DRP) ACTING CHAIRMAN YI HYU-SANG TOLD REPORTERS MARCH 28 THAT DRP ASSEMBLYMAN WOULD VISIT THEIR CONSTITUENCIES TO STUDY THE PROBLEMS ARISING FROM ALL OF THESE CONTROVERSIAL LAWS. HE SUGGESTED THAT BEFOREHAND THEY SHOULD BE BRIEFED BY THE GOVT ON THE LAWS' OBJECTIVES. HE PROMISED THAT DRP WOULD PROPOSE AMENDMENTS TO THE EXTENT THEY WERE FOUND NECESSARY. DRP FLOOR LEADER TOLD AMBASSADOR AT LUNCH MARCH 29 THAT HIS PARTY WISHED TO REVISE CONTROVERSIAL LAWS AND THAT HE HOPED DRP COULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE DURING SPECIAL NATIONAL ASSEMBLY SESSION IN MAY AND WIN CREDIT WHILE PREVENTING OPPOSITION FROM EXPLOITING THESE ISSUES.

5. COMMENT: PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION OF FOREST PLAN WOULD HAVE DEPRIVED SMALL FARMERS OF FUEL AND FODDER SUPPLY ON WHICH THEY HAVE ALWAYS DEPENDED AND IT HAD ALREADY AROUSED WIDESPREAD PROTEST FROM CITY DWELLERS WHO LOVE TO HIKE IN MOUNTAINS. AGATT HAS LEARNED THAT CATTLE PRICES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECENTLY DECLINED WHEN NORMALLY THERE WOULD BE A SEASONAL RISE, APPARENTLY BECAUSE FARMERS HAVE SOLD CATTLE FOR SLAUGHTER IN THE BELIEF THEY WOULD NOT BE FREE TO CUT GRASS ON HILLTOPS. IN CANCELLING FORESTRY PLAN, GOVT RESPONDED TO POPULAR SENTIMENT. MEANWHILE, GOVT HAS FOCUSED PUBLIC ATTENTION ON PROBLEMS OF FORESTRY CONSERVATION, ON USE OF VALUABLE LAND FOR GRAVES AND ON TRADITIONAL LAVISH SPENDING FOR PRIVATE

CEREMONIES. GOVT MAY NOW PROCEED TO TACKLE THESE
PROBLEMS ON A LONG TERM BASIS. DECONTROL 1/1/75.
HABIB

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